A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

North-British Society,

IN

HALIFAX, NOVA-SCOTIA,

AT THEIR

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

ON THE

30th of November, 1790.

By ANDREW BROWN, D.D.

HALIFAX:
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M.DCC.XCI.

1620. Brown.

AT a Meeting of the *North-Britiſh Society*, in *Halifax*, *Nova-Scotia*, on Saturday the 4th Day of December, 1790,

Agreed, That the Thanks of the Society be given to the Reverend Dr. *Brown*, for the Diſcourſe delivered by him on the 30th of November, before the Society; and that he be deſired to deliver a Copy of the ſame to the Society to be printed.

WILLIAM SMITH, *Sec'ry.*

TO THE

Preſident, Vice-Preſident and Members

OF EACH OF THE

NATIONAL SOCIETIES

ESTABLISHED IN HALIFAX,

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

CONTAINING

Hints and Obſervations ſuppoſed to be applicable to them all,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NORTH-BRITISH SOCIETY

On the 30th of November,

AND PRINTED AT THEIR DESIRE,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

North-Britiſh Society:

PSALM cxxxvii. 5, 6.

If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

COUNTRYMEN and Friends, this is a day of national commemoration, and theſe pathetic effuſions of the Iſraelitiſh captives, as they wept by the rivers of Babylon and hanged their harps upon the willows, may be taken to expreſs our preſent feelings with reſpect to the land of our nativity, and our kindred and connections there. To day the ſluices of the heart are open, and memory recurs to years that are paſt, and to places that are diſtant. In the mind's eye we ſee our cradle and the ſeats of our youth, and feel, at every pulſe, the intereſt we ſtill take in the fortunes of our friends and the aſhes of our fathers.

THE aſſociations of ideas, on which are founded many of the inſtitutions of civil life, though ſlight and caſual in themſelves, are, nevertheleſs, boundleſs in their extent and wonderful in their operation. This day is marked in the Calendar with the name, and is, by the rubric, conſecrated to the memory of Andrew the Apoſtle. In our minds it is connected with the ſentiments of patriotiſm, and with the regards we owe to the country in which we opened our eyes upon the light, and enjoyed the firſt bleſſings of exiſtence. A rapid glance at the page of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, will at once explain the origin of this aſſociation, and introduce the proper ſubject of the preſent diſcourſe.

IN

In the infancy of the Church, the piety of Chriſtians aſſigned ſeparate and ſucceſſive feſtivals to the glorious college of Apoſtles, and to the noble army of Martyrs. Theſe unrivalled Champions of the Croſs, ſpent their lives in propagating the faith, and having reſiſted unto blood the fury of perſecution, ſealed the ſincerity of their profeſſion by confeſſing Jeſus in the extremity of torture, and adoring him on the utmoſt verge of the viſible world. To perpetuate the memory of their holy race and happy reward, particular days, diſtinguiſhed by their birth, their call or their martyrdom, were ſet apart for the annual recollection of the leading incidents of their lives. On theſe ſolemn occaſions, the time, the place, and the manner of their converſion was ſpecified and explained. The ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith, from this period, received its juſt atteſtation. The zeal of their miniſtry, their aſſiduity in doing good, their excellent gifts and admirable graces, were anxiouſly recorded, and ſcrupulouſly confirmed by infallible proofs. Blameleſs in their lives and bleſſed in their death, they were propoſed as models for the imitation of the faithful; and fervent prayers were offered to the Almighty, that their ſpirit and virtues might deſcend to their ſucceſſors, to adorn the triumphs of the Goſpel, and warm a believing world with the piety and benevolence of Jeſus.

When Chriſtianity became the religion of the empire, the merits of its founders were not forgotten, nor were their cuſtomary honours ungraciouſly withheld. As their feſtivals returned, clergy and laity ſuſpended their ordinary labours, and repaired in crowds to countenance an inſtitution, ſo rational in itſelf, and ſo well adapted to promote the intereſts of religion and virtue.

But no ordinance, however pure or pious it may be, is exempted from abuſe. The Church became the proprietor and miſtreſs of the Saints; and it was unhappily believed that her bulwarks were ſtrengthened, as her treaſury was enriched, by their increaſe. In conſequence of this idea, they were multiplied beyond meaſure, and exalted above their higheſt deſerts. When hiſtory and tradition failed, fictitious legends were ſhamefully obtruded upon a ſimple and credulous people. In the anniverſary orations, the Genius of the cloiſter found ample ſcope to diſplay itſelf; hyperboles of praiſe were heaped upon each other; and truth and taſte were equally violated in the panegyrics of the Saints. From conſidering and magnifying their good deeds on earth, the heated mind was tranſported to the contemplation of their heavenly glory. Thus wound up, the vehemence of oratory burſt into an impaſſioned

paſſioned addreſs to the ſpirit before the throne. The eyes of the congregation followed thoſe of the preacher; their imaginations were moved and agitated; and, in the deluſion of the moment, they believed that God had ſent down his Saints to viſit and defend them. As this idea grew with the growing errors of the times, the devotional parts of the ſervice, that had originally been directed to the Almighty, were intercepted by the Saint. Religious honours were paid to him; and, in caſes of emergency, public prayers were offered in his name. Thus, in proceſs of time, through prieſtcraft operating upon ignorance, this inſtitution, introduced into the Church to immortalize the memory of the witneſſes of Jeſus, and to animate Chriſtians in ſucceeding ages to follow their example, became the pregnant ſource of ſuperſtition and idolatry.

THE popular and claſſical notion that individuals, and tribes, and nations, have a tutelary ſpirit, a peculiar ſuperintendant, appears from its antiquity and extent to be congenial to the human mind. In the blindneſs of ſelf-love, mankind have even cheriſhed the belief that their voice might determine the nomination of heaven to offices of this nature. Hence they have always been ſolicitous to eſtabliſh an advocate of their own ſelection at the throne of God. In the times of Heatheniſm, the choice of prieſts and people generally fell on ſome illuſtrious ſhade of their own nation, endeared to them by birth, attached to them by patriotiſm, and ſtimulated to continual exertions in their favour by the poſthumous honours that were paid him in his country.

IN the dark and barbarous ages which followed the fall of the Roman empire, this infatuation again aroſe, and pervaded the kingdoms of Europe. It was encouraged by the policy of the Church, and ſupplied from the evangelical roll of ſaints and worthies, which afforded an abundant latitude of choice. During the reign of ſuperſtition and impoſture, this deluſion running wild, the local deities of Pagan mythology were revived, in more ſubſtantial forms, in the Chriſtian world. At the period to which I now refer, no aſſociation was formed, no enterprize projected, without committing it to the ſuperintendence of ſome Saint in heaven. Every temple, every village, every city and every kingdom had its celeſtial Patron. In this intereſting article, Kings and Princes made the choice for their ſubjects, or devoutly acquieſced in the *infallible* nomination of the common Father of Chriſtendom. The country, the government, and the people, were ſolemnly conſigned to the protection of their tutelary Saint. His croſs quartered their arms, and diſtinguiſhed their

banners

banners and their ſhields. His ſhadowy aid was beſought in action and in difficulty. When the Captains of the hoſt gave the ſignal to cloſe, and the impatient champion ſingled out his antagoniſt, he invoked the Saint of his fathers, and in the frenzy of the times the armies of heaven were ſuppoſed to march under hoſtile ſtandards to fight the battles of the earth.

In the general diſtribution of the nations, the care of Scotland was committed to St. Andrew. His apoſtolical life was ſpent on the mountains of Scythia; and I have neither diſcovered, nor been very ſolicitous to enquire, upon what peculiar merit, or what principle of appropriation, *that* province was aſſigned to him. It is of more importance to obſerve, that in conſequence of the canonization and local inveſtiture of theſe holy perſons, the orations delivered on their feſtivals aſſumed a new form. The hiſtory and heroic atchievements of the people, which they patroniſed, came to be interwoven with the purer triumphs of their apoſtolical ſanctity. Immediate advantage was taken of this revolution, and in artful hands a religious deluſion ſerved as an engine of politics. The hoſtile paſſions were kindled, and the thirſt of blood was inflamed, before the croſs of peace and reconciliation. The paſſive virtues of the Chriſtian were forgotten; and the very commemorations of the Saints were made to propagate a rage for military enterprize. In every other reſpect the devotions of the day were illiberal and degrading. The adoring nations lifted not their voice to the majeſty in the heavens. Their prayers were preferred to a departed mortal; and in our country "St. Andrew hear us; St. Andrew help us; St. "Andrew intercede for us," was the general cry.

Delivered at the reformation from the yoke of ſuperſtition, our Church ordained, in the purity and ſimplicity of her worſhip, that the days of the Saints, as formerly ſolemnized, having neither countenance nor warrant in the ſcriptures, and being ever liable to abuſe, ſhould ceaſe to be obſerved as religious feſtivals. This was conceded; but the traces of immemorial uſage could not be obliterated in a day. The public offices, and commercial companies for the negociation of exchange, ſtill note the letter of the calendar, and aſſert the annual intermiſſion from buſineſs which had heretofore been enjoyed upon the holidays of the Church. Different inſtitutions and orders within the realm make the nominal feſtival of their Saint the day of their anniverſary meeting; and national Societies abroad ſelect it as a fit occaſion for an annual entertainment, accompanied ſometimes with a religious obſervance and a public contribution.

You have now adopted this laudable cuſtom, and, as a charitable Aſſociation, you have done well to conſecrate your national attachments at the altar of Religion, and to preſent yourſelves before God, as the almoners of his bounty to your poorer and leſs fortunate countrymen.

To me you have intruſted the flattering office of improving your firſt religious anniverſary; and in preparing a diſcourſe for it, I have conſidered what would be due to you, to thoſe who hear me, and to the place where we are met. Inſtead, therefore, of deluding your curioſity with an apocryphal biography of our Saint, or inſulting your underſtanding with an invidious eulogium of our country, I have determined to call your attention, 1ſt. To the objections that are commonly made to inſtitutions of this nature; and 2dly. To the purpoſes to which this of ours may be rendered ſubſervient in the preſent ſtate of the community; taking the liberty to ſuggeſt ſome new hints for your future conſideration.

I. I am firſt to call your attention to the objections that are commonly made to inſtitutions of this nature.

The objectors to private aſſociations of every deſcription, commonly alledge, that they tend to circumſcribe the ſocial virtues of charity and mercy, which Chriſtianity requires to be univerſal and unbounded: that they perpetuate narrow prejudices and national diſtinctions, and keep the members of a new community from uniting together and becoming one body: fomenting the ſpirit of party and feeding the flames of faction whenever a ſucceſſion of unfortunate events co-operates to give them birth.

It will be allowed that this is nearly the ſum of the general objection, partly religious and partly political, which is made to national ſocieties, and to charitable aſſociations founded on national principles.

To all captious and indiſcriminate charges of this nature, it might perhaps be deemed a ſufficient anſwer, that no reaſoning from the abuſe can, by any legitimate rule of logic, be urged againſt the uſe of human inſtitutions: that ſublunary things are mixed and imperfect: that no religious, or civil, or political arrangement of man's invention is abſolutely and invariably good: that, by the laws of nature, advantages are mingled with defects: and that difficulties and dangers are inſeparable from every reſolution we form, and every ſtep we take.

But in the preſent inſtance we can intrench ourſelves on higher ground. It may ſafely be aſſerted, that the foundation of our inſtitution is laid by the hand of nature; that the principle of it is, conſequently, a good one; and that the abuſes objected to it are only caſual and incidental, and are not in fact experienced in any ſenſible degree.

To prove this, let us conſider the manner in which our obligations are formed and extended; perceived by the underſtanding and engraved upon the heart.

What countenance gives animation and joy to the infant on the knee? Is it not that of the parent, or of thoſe who fulfil a parent's duties, and merit a parent's reward? Who exerciſe and engage the firſt affections of the boy? Is it not his family, his companions, and his neighbourhood? Undoubtedly it is. From earlieſt youth he cultivates their acquaintance, and is ſolicitous to obtain their eſteem; attends to their converſation, and takes a decided intereſt in their affairs. In his progreſs to manhood his mind and his views expand. As he liſtens to the traditions of the diſtrict, or liſps the hiſtorical ballad of a former age, his heart and affections embrace a party. In the internal conflicts of the people he warms, and glows, and becomes a zealot for the honour of his province; and in the ſtrife of nations he buckles on the armour of his native heroes, renews the fields of blood, hears the cry of victory, joins the purſuit, and, in imagination, kills the ſlain.

Of all the ſentiments that ſpring ſpontaneous in our boſom, and continue, without our care, to gather ſtrength through life, thoſe which connect us with our country and endear it to our hearts, are, by far, the moſt deeply rooted and widely ſpread. They are the growth of no climate, and do not depend upon fertility of ſoil or ſalubrity of ſituation. They obtain and are recognized, in every parallel of latitude, from one end of the earth to the other; and conſtitute an important part of the natural religion of the heart. Their magical power gives to the barren plain a charm and a faſcination which inherent beauties cannot beſtow. They attach the untutored native to the horizon of his birth, in preference to every other tract on the ſurface of the globe. With a ſilken cord they bind him to the ſtorms and the froſts, the penury and the hardſhips of his native ſoil, and render the ſcanty fare it may yield preferable to the varied fertility of any other land. In every language we find the world exile, and among the moſt wretched tribes the exiled are objects of commiſeration. In the ſcantieſt and rudeſt dialect we hear the

rapturous

rapturous expreſſion "home," and they who are calm and cool on every other occaſion, utter this word with an emphaſis and emotion which is not perceived in the tone of ordinary converſation.

Now, although it is very true that this feeling may have its exceſs, and although the bigotry of attachment to the land of our nativity may unfit us for enjoying the comforts of any other, yet, in its proper place, it is both laudable and virtuous. It occupies, according to the obvious intention of the Author of our nature, a diſtinguiſhed ſtation in the graduated ſcale of the diſpoſitions and duties of ſocial life, and furniſhes the principle of that inſtitution for which I am contending.

It is indeed univerſally acknowledged that there are primary and ſecondary obligations incumbent on us as members of civil ſociety; and that the prior muſt be diſcharged, before we can be juſtified in proceeding to ſatisfy the poſterior. Thus, when the demands of juſtice are cancelled, and we owe no man any thing but the love which Jeſus has preſcribed, the claims of natural affection are confeſſedly pre-eminent; and parents and children, brothers and ſiſters, before they ſhew kindneſs to others, ought to make due proviſion for thoſe, who are, in ſcripture, emphatically called "their own fleſh." The debts of gratitude ſucceed; the rights of friendſhip and decayed relations rank next in order; and as we recede farther and farther from perfect obligation, an acquaintance is to be preferred to a ſtranger, and, in ſimilar circumſtances and equal ſtraits, a ſtranger of our own country to a ſtranger of a foreign one. This, as it has been ſhewn to be a natural, muſt be admitted as a rational ground of diſtinction. For even between claims, otherwiſe equal, ſome diſtinction is neceſſary; and what is likely to be more unexceptionable than one which is dictated by nature, and approved by the practice of all mankind?

It is obvious then that the ſame objections that are urged, with ſo much parade of philanthropy, againſt national predilections and the combinations reſulting from them, ought, if the objectors were conſiſtent with themſelves and followed up their reaſonings, to be oppoſed with equal force to the attachments and duties of kindred, the bonds of gratitude, the rights of friendſhip, the obligations of neighbourhood, and, in a word, to the whole fabric of civil ſociety from its loweſt foundation to its chief corner ſtone. If the ſentiments and conduct that ſpring from any one of theſe relations, are incompatible with Chriſtian charity, *it* reſtrains them all. But

if thoſe which are moſt perſonal in their object, and moſt limited in their operation, are yet commendable and good, they can never ſurely grow criminal as they grow diffuſive. If the ties which bind heart to heart, and hand to hand, can be defended and juſtified, even upon goſpel principles, doubtleſs much more eaſily may thoſe be juſtified which join city to city, province to province, and connect in one chain the lives and happineſs of millions.

In anſwer to the political objection, that inſtitutions of this nature tend to perpetuate local prejudices and national diſtinctions, and to keep the different claſſes of a new community from uniting into one body; it may be remarked, that it is partly true, and partly without foundation.

National ſocieties, no doubt, preſerve national prejudices, and give countrymen a predilection for countrymen. But this predilection exiſts without them; they find but do not make it; and if the national prejudices which they cheriſh (patriotic ones, if any ſuch there be) are all in favour of a principle to which every good breaſt vibrates, namely, the proſperity of our native land; and if, as colonial ſubjects, they are in favour of the conſtitution and eſtabliſhment, the religion and laws, the glory and the government of the mother country, who that hears me would wiſh to ſee them *diminiſhed*, far leſs *obliterated*?

If we have any national prejudices of a different complexion; if, like the Jews and the Samaritans, we have, to our reproach, any that avert from us every fellow-creature whoſe fortune it was not to be born and bred in the ſame land with ourſelves; any that diſincline us from all dealings with foreigners, and tend to confine to countrymen excluſively the common offices of neighbourhood and good fellowſhip,—for ſuch I am no advocate, and for ſuch, I truſt, this Society will never need an apology.

With regard to the deeper and more criminal charge, that national ſocieties foment the ſpirit of party and feed the flames of faction, this again reſolves itſelf, at worſt, into an objection againſt all connection and aſſociation in life whatever. At any rate, the obſervation has never been verified by experience. On the contrary, hiſtory demonſtrates, that in all the great empires where parties have been trained and employed, they have been collected and banded not according to country and province, but according to perſonal congruities and coincidence of intereſt, reſulting from other cauſes than

than what form the ground of the objection I am now combating. Countrymen and even blood relations are found indiſcriminately on either ſide; connected or oppoſed by hopes and paſſions, which neither the ties of kindred nor of country were ſufficient to controul.

INSTITUTIONS of this kind are in their very nature repugnant to treaſons and conſpiracies. Theſe myſteries of darkneſs dare not venture abroad, but ſeek the concealment of the chamber and the ſolitude of the night. Such inſtitutions are not even adapted to ſerve political purpoſes. No national Society, however maſterly its regulations, and however able its conductors, could ſubſiſt long as a combination to force the favours of government, and to monopolize the offices it has to beſtow. Though they obtained the prize, they would quarrel about the appropriation of it, and the diſcordant competitors would ſooner ſee the vacancies ſupplied by ſtrangers, than by rivals in their own aſſociation.

IF ever national Societies ſtep forward into public view, and challenge the notice of the world, it can only be to pay the tribute of admiration and of gratitude to the eminently good, or to brand the incorrigible with merited infamy. To the former they will never be an object of diſtruſt, and to the latter may they prove a perpetual ſource of anxiety and apprehenſion.

Be ſuch the vindication of national Societies; and to the native of every country be ſuch the arguments for adhering to his own.

II. I now proceed to enumerate the purpoſes to which our inſtitution may be rendered ſubſervient in the preſent ſtate of the community: taking the liberty to ſuggeſt ſome new hints for your future conſideration.

1ſt. THE fundamental principle upon which this Society was eſtabliſhed, was, to aſſiſt and ſupport ſuffering countrymen in indigence, in ſickneſs, or under the preſſures of ſudden and ſevere calamity.

With this deſign, and greatly to their honour, the natives of Scotland, reſident in Halifax, formed themſelves into an aſſociation in the year 1768. With the hearts of patriots they founded a common ſtock out of the ſavings of proſperity, and in the ſpirit of Chriſtians made a common cauſe of the misfortunes to which all were liable. The ſettlement had not then attained that ſtability and permanence which it this day enjoys.

joys. The municipal charity of the town was leſs perfect in its ſcheme, and its funds were leſs adequate to their object, than now. The firſt contributions were therefore religiouſly appropriated to ſuch diſtreſſed inhabitants as had emigrated from Scotland; and as theſe chiefly conſiſted of the aged, the infirm and the deſtitute, they became ſettled penſioners, and were voted a regular quarterly allowance. Kept in a low ſtate by this continual expenditure, the occaſional demands for the extraordinary bounty of the Society ſoon exceeded the compaſs of the funds upon which they were made. But grievous viſitations and ſcenes of complicated ſuffering frequently preſenting themſelves, theſe gradually concurred with the progreſſive advancement of public affairs to extend the views of the Society, and to induce them to reſerve their aid for the greater diſtreſſes of life. This has for ſometime paſt been the leading principle of your appropriations, and it may be worth while to enquire whether you ought not, in prudence, to adhere to it in time to come.

To enter more particularly into this conſideration, it may be obſerved, that as the municipal allowance of the poor, though ſmall, is yet ſtated and duly advanced; as it knows no diſtinction of country, but is impartially extended to all with due attention only to the age, the ſex and condition of the object; it appears equally unadviſeable to take the unfortunate of our country from the weekly proviſion of a legal ſettlement, or to interpoſe in their behalf, on common occaſions, as a national Society, after having contributed to their ſupport in our private capacity as citizens of Halifax. The idea is pregnant with diſtinctions of the moſt pernicious tendency, which, whenever they find their way into a community, it requires one age of wrangling to detect, and another of conceſſion and forbearance to extinguiſh.

It muſt alſo be remembered that in a fluctuating Society, a national charity muſt ever be unequal to the double charge of conſtant penſions, and of effectual interpoſition on ſingular emergencies. Thus ſcattered, its efforts muſt be languid, deſultory and fruitleſs. The fiery embers neither glow nor give heat unleſs collected to a common centre; diſperſe them, their fervour is loſt, and they periſh in darkneſs.

May not theſe conſiderations ſuggeſt the propriety of perſevering to appropriate your fund, in a particular manner, to caſes of great and unexpected calamity, againſt which prudence cannot guard, and for which neither the police of the town, nor private liberality can make an adequate proviſion? This

This deſcription comprehends the grievous ſum of accidents to which mortality is expoſed; the undiſtinguiſhing devaſtations of fire; the fury of the whelming wave; the ſudden death of the heads of families, with the firſt miſeries of the widow and the orphan; deep diſtreſs of various ſorts, ariſing from contingencies not eaſily to be enumerated; in a word, all that ſoftens the heart of fleſh within us, and forces the ſympathy of kindred natures.

At the ſame time it is not to be doubted but that the exigencies of your own members will command (and it is fit they ſhould) your firſt attention. It may likewiſe be believed, that to the aged and the deſolate of your country you will not always be able to refuſe an occaſional aſſiſtance. To your credit, your books have uniformly exhibited penſioners of this deſcription; nor is it intended, by any thing now offered, to diſcountenance the humane and generous ſpirit. To your candour and wiſdom it is only ſubmitted, whether it might not be proper to diſpenſe ſuch aids with as frugal a hand as poſſible, that you may have it in your power to meet deeper diſtreſs and ſtronger calls for compaſſion, with that liberality which you are known to poſſeſs, and to inſtances of which he who now addreſſes you can, during the period of his miniſtry, abundantly teſtify.

2dly. This Society has long been, and may ſtill be, eminently uſeful, in two of the moſt trying periods of our condition; in the hour of ſickneſs and in the article of death.

In the fluctuations and uncertainties of an infant ſettlement and a ſea-port town, the anguiſh of diſeaſe and the viſitations of mortality, come attended with circumſtances of peculiar aggravation. Here multitudes are met, from the various countries of Europe and America, without previous habitudes of intimacy or connection. Their reſidence is precarious, their union imperfect. They live in a moving ſcene, and do not continue long in one ſtay. In ſuch circumſtances ſolid attachment and real friendſhip muſt be extremely rare. But they are equally needful in every region of the globe. Sickneſs and decay follow us to the ends of the earth, and wherever they overtake us, ſympathy and compaſſion are ineſtimable.

Little do they know the lot of the emigrant, who, amidſt native ſcenes, contemplate it through the medium of their own ſufferings, real or imaginary. While at the diſtance of a wide extended ocean, under the incumbrance, it may be, of a family, and the embarraſſments of debt, the parent,

rent, 'midſt the ſtruggles of his calling, exults only in the idea that one of his race is exempted from the condition to which the reſt are doomed, and by his virtues and reputation reflects honour on the name, and on a growing fortune, —This ſtranger, in a ſtrange land, more to be pitied than all his generation, is, perhaps, ſtretched on the bed of languiſhing, and left to ſhiver and to burn, through all the varieties of the ague's cold and the fever's heat, deſtitute of the miniſtrations for which kindred were given us. In his diſtreſs, even the humane do not feel themſelves ſo much intereſted in his fortune as to ſtep forward in his behalf, under the double hazard of delivering their names to the malice of ſlander by aſſuming the office of conducting his buſineſs, and of incurring the ſtill more dangerous conſequence of becoming reſponſible for his property to his creditors and heirs. In this ſituation money is but of ſmall avail. It cannot purchaſe a heart, and the attentions which it buys are altogether of an inferior and coarſer kind. The perſons who nurſe the ſick for wages cannot approach their bed with that tenderneſs of ſympathy and that confidence of affection which the nearer relations of life inſpire. It is not their office to watch and to prevent the riſing wiſhes of the ſoul; to wipe the cold ſweat from the brow; to claſp the trembling hand, and hold the aching head; to mark and to feel the rollings of the eye; to receive the ſecret bitterneſs of the heart, in which a ſtranger cannot intermeddle; and to mingle with the balm of friendſhip and of piety the ineſtimable cup of Chriſtian conſolation. This is not colouring; it is not half the truth. Could I lead you through the different habitations of the emigrant and the adventurer, from the vertical ſun of India to the polar froſts of Labradore, and enumerate, as I turned from every ſick man's bed, the ſymptoms of his diſeaſe and the attendance he enjoyed, I ſhould ſoon convince you how much is ſuffered by that deſcription of men in this ſeaſon of exigence.

THE heart-felt ſympathies of tender union are incommunicable; and even this inſtitution, with all its nationality, can ſupply them but in part. But what can be ſupplied, is done moſt effectually. In the land of ſtrangers it brings to the bed of the diſtreſſed and the friendleſs the countenance of a countryman, a voice and an accent which is known. I have witneſſed with joy, and I record with gladneſs, your unwearied care in procuring a ſucceſſion of attendants, and your meritorious condeſcenſion in performing the humble offices that a ſick bed requires. Too much praiſe cannot be beſtowed on this part of your conduct, and it has originated, I believe, with this inſtitution. The beneficial effects of it have been

been frequently experienced, and are regiſtered in a book where they will never be forgotten. In the name of that God whom we are aſſembled to adore, I bid you proceed in theſe labours of love; I bid you proceed and proſper. If you need encouragement, liſten to the Scriptures and learn your reward; "Be not weary in well doing, for in due ſeaſon you ſhall reap if you faint not." Perſevere in the pious office. Let not ingratitude itſelf reſtrain you; it did not reſtrain your Lord. Remember that here below mercy is twice bleſſed, once to the object of mercy, and again to the merciful; and that hereafter it will prove your robe and your diadem in the kingdom of your Father.

In the article of death the aſſiſtance of this Society has not been wanting.

Your anxious attention, and comprehenſive charity, not only relieve the wants of poverty, and alleviate the agonies of pain, they alſo ſuſtain the laſt moments of expiration, and ſoothe the departing ſpirit with the conſolatory aſſurance that its duſt will be treated with reſpect and receive the honours of Chriſtian burial.

One of the firſt, and not the leaſt memorable, of the laws which the drum and the provoſt-marſhal proclaimed among the mixed multitude on the beach of Chebucto, was, that on the death of a ſettler the juſtices of the peace were empowered to nominate twelve perſons of the quarter to which he belonged, to accompany the funeral and depoſit the corpſe in the grave; and that while the Royal allowance of proviſions laſted, the name of every perſon who refuſed to obey this ſummons ſhould be erazed from the meſs-books. This penalty ſeems to have been inſufficient to procure the attendance required, and a few months after the magiſtrates received orders to puniſh the inhuman refuſal with commitment.

This is a gloomy view of the ſtate of things in a new eſtabliſhment; but it is a juſt one. Extraordinary laws are dictated by extraordinary neceſſity; and in the preſent inſtance it may be conceived that the indifference about the diſeaſed, the dying and the dead, which pervaded the encampment of three thouſand people, caſt, without any connecting tie, on the ſand of a foreign ſhore and the ſkirt of an unknown foreſt, muſt have been extreme.

Happily this ſpirit has long ceaſed; and from the preſent appearance of our funerals no perſon would ſuppoſe that an e-

dict of this nature had ever been neceſſary in Halifax. Indeed the reverſe is now to be lamented. The burial of the dead is become rather too expenſive; and I call on you, and on every national Society in the province, to diſcountenance and correct the extravagance. Retrench, if you cannot aboliſh, the idle parade and oſtentatious expence, ſo frivolous and puerile at all times, but ſo peculiarly unſeaſonable at a funeral. It is of no avail to the dead, and materially injurious to the living. A decent, an affectionate reſpect, may be ſhewn to the memory and remains of the neareſt and deareſt relative without it. It forms no part of real mourning, and is indiſputably calculated rather to flatter the vanity of the ſurvivors than to do honour to the deceaſed.

In the ſpirit of rational and virtuous reform, might it not be proper and conſiſtent, nay more, my countrymen, is it not abſolutely incumbent on you as a national Society, to adhere ſcrupulouſly and inflexibly, in this article, to the ſimple ceremonial of your native land? That weakneſs of character which receives a new direction from every impulſe of faſhion is unworthy of a national Society. Be not then ſwayed by a ſlaviſh imitation—nor employ on the moſt ſolemn occaſion that expenſive pageantry, which, however venerable it may appear in the country where it has been conſecrated by immemorial uſage, is out of character here, as well as a dead loſs to your fund of charity. Have the courage to make the reform propoſed as a national aſſociation, and as individuals have the conſiſtency to adhere to it inviolably in your families, however eaſy your circumſtances may be. In private life there is no one who does not ſee, and feel, and deplore this tyranical cuſtom; who does not heartily wiſh it aboliſhed; and who would not be ſincerely glad to find a precedent to juſtify the abolition. But few, in compariſon, poſſeſs that fortitude of mind which is neceſſary towards ſubmitting their reaſons for being ſingular to public obſervation and private ſcandal; and leaſt of all on a ſubject ſo delicate as that of reſpect to the dead, where the ſmalleſt ſaving is ever imputable to a ſordid motive. On this account it is ſo much the more neceſſary to be undertaken by a public aſſociation. The reform is worthy of you; may you merit the thanks of poſterity for effecting it!

3dly. A third laudable purpoſe to which your inſtitution may be rendered ſubſervient, is, to grant, under your ſeal and the ſignature of your Preſident, certificates and recommendations to the deſerving of your number, whoſe removal to other lands, in queſt of employment and ſubſiſtence, various cauſes may compel.

This,

THIS, in every point of view, is an object of equal importance with the preceding, and I therefore crave your moſt ſerious attention in its behalf. Indeed protection and patronage take place of alms, in proportion as a friend is of more value than a little money.

UNDER the ſpreading population of the new world as well as of the old, the difficulty will every day increaſe of procuring confidence and employment, without ſufficient documents of adequate talents and a blameleſs life. In the infancy of the colonies, the ſcarcity of men made it neceſſary to abate much of that jealous enquiry into the hiſtory and merits of ſettlers and ſervants which is cuſtomary in countries that have been longer eſtabliſhed. The preſence of emigrants was ſo conſolatory, and their aſſiſtance ſo needful, that they were kindly received and courteouſly entertained by every government, But this period is nearly paſt. A rapid population begins to produce a keen competition for the various appointments of life; and, every thing elſe equal, a ſmaller ſcale of ſubordination and a ſimpler ſtate of manners is likely ſoon to make perſonal merit of more conſequence here, than we find it in parts of the globe more highly improved.

IN the preſent condition of the town and colony, it may juſtly be apprehended that application for certificates will not be wanting. Where ſo many hazardous experiments are made on fortune and happineſs, as every day diſcloſes, failures are unavoidable; and after exhauſting the reſources which the place affords, the ſcene muſt be ſhifted, and a new theatre tried. The conviction of the importance of obtaining creditable recommendations, in exigencies of this kind, may do much good. It may operate on our countrymen as a powerful incitement to that temperance and induſtry for which they have been remarked;—that in every reverſe they may ſtill enjoy, under your inſtitution, the invaluable bleſſing of a good character; and the aſſurance of carrying a reſpectable introduction among ſtrangers, if it ſhall be neceſſary for them to relinquiſh their eſtabliſhment in this Province, and their friends in this Society.

THE fitneſs and propriety, the importance and utility of your inſtitution, muſt have appeared in a ſtronger light from this enumeration of its ends, than from the formal vindication of its foundation and principle at an earlier period of the diſcourſe.

HOWEVER inexpedient and unneceſſary ſuch Societies may be elſewhere, here, at leaſt, they are both commendable and

of

of uſe. As yet our charitable eſtabliſhments are few in number; and common pity has ſo many calls that it is in the utmoſt danger of waxing cold. The heart needs to be touched and the hand to be opened by ſome powerful principle of equal and uninterrupted operation. Such a principle is national attachment; a principle that has here done much good, which without it would not have been done, and relieved much diſtreſs, which without it would not have been relieved.

WHEN, at ſome future period, this portion of America ſhall aſſume a more ſettled form; when emigration, from Europe, in its preſent extent, ſhall ceaſe; when nationality ſhall be blended and loſt; when municipal endowments ſhall be numerous and rich, and when this inſtitution ſhall be no longer neceſſary; then let the few adminiſtering curators who find no countrymen to claim their aid, aſſign our fund to the ſtock of general charity, and place our archives in the moſt conſpicuous ſhelf of the provincial library, to perpetuate among our deſcendants the remembrance of their obligations to Britain, and to ſerve as an admonition to them never to ſuffer the ſtranger to pine unpitied, to ſicken without attendants and medicines, or to die without the decencies of burial. Meanwhile, we, of the preſent generation, who drew our breath in the other hemiſphere, who there received the rudiments of our education, and there formed the *firſt* friendſhips of life, may hope to be forgiven, if entertaining no averſion to foreigners and refuſing them no act of kindneſs or humanity, we, at the ſame time, cheriſh a tender and grateful regard for the land of our nativity, and expreſs it in the glowing language of the text "If I forget thee O Jeruſalem let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." AMEN.